

WASHINGTON – Arizona students will receive a helping hand in their pursuit of a college education under legislation passed today by U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell and the House of Representatives. The College Opportunity and Affordability Act, which increases the maximum Pell Grant from \$5,800 to \$9,000, passed with a strong, bipartisan vote of 354 to 58.

“As a former teacher, I understand the value of higher education and how important it is to the future of our country,” said Mitchell. “At a time when college costs are rising so quickly, we have a responsibility to make sure that all students who work hard and earn good grades realize their dream of going to college.”

H.R. 4137 also

- Prohibits college loan lenders from providing schools with financial incentives in order to get on a “preferred lender list.”
- Provides a new \$10,000 loan forgiveness program for those serving in high-need areas such as nursing and teaching and mental health profession.
- Encourages states to resist attempts to cut education funding.
- Requires college and universities to treat students in the armed forces returning from military service as continually enrolled students.
- Reauthorizes the Teach for America program, which recruits and trains recent college graduates to teach in high-need areas.

Last year, The Arizona Republic pointed out that investments in college education create greater economic opportunity. “A college degree pays off. We all know that's true for individuals - giving, for instance, a 94 percent boost in income to a male worker ages 35 to 44, compared with a high school graduate... The bottom line affects us all. Not least because the companies Arizona hopes to attract and nurture, those with the brightest prospects for the 21st century, are looking for a large pool of highly educated workers,” the

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wrote. [Source:

[The Arizona Republic](#)
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